

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
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S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 TOKYO 2559

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FOR SHERMAN, EA/J

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MARR, JA, OVIP
SUBJECT: FUKUDA VISIT PAPER: US-JAPAN SECURITY RELATIONSHIP

REF: STATE 33987

1. US-JAPAN SECURITY RELATIONS ARE ON A MORE EVEN KEEL THAN THEY HAVE BEEN AT ANY TIME SINCE THE PEACE TREATY. THE SECURITY TREATY, ONCE A POLITICAL FOOTBALL, HAS GAINED GENERAL POPULAR ACCEPTANCE AS AN INTEGRAL AND CRUCIAL ELEMENT IN THE COMPLEX OF POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC TIES BETWEEN THE US AND JAPAN. THIS WAS MANIFEST IN THE RECENT GENERAL ELECTION, WHEN EVEN THE COMMUNIST PARTY (TEMPORARILY) DROPPED ITS DEMAND FOR IMMEDIATE ABROGATION OF THE TREATY AND THE SECURITY RELATIONSHIP DID NOT FIGURE AS A CAMPAIGN ISSUE FOR ANY OF THE PARTIES. DEVELOPMENTS SUCH AS THE US WITHDRAWAL FROM SOUTHEAST ASIA, NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH THE PRC, DETENTE, OKINAWA REVERSION AND THE GRADUAL REDUCTION AND CONSOLIDATION OF US MILITARY BASES IN JAPAN HAVE ALL TENDED TO REDUCE THE IMPORTANCE OF SECURITY AS A SOURCE OF CONTENTION IN OUR RELATIONS.

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2. FOR JAPAN THE TREATY PROVIDES DETERRENT AGAINST EXTERNAL ATTACK AND, IN PARTICULAR, AGAINST NUCLEAR THREAT. IT ALSO PRECLUDES THE NEED FOR JAPANESE DEVELOPMENT OF SUBSTANTIAL INDEPENDENT MILITARY POWER, WHICH WOULD BE DESTABILIZING FOR THE REGION. FOR THE US, THE TREATY PROVIDES ACCESS TO BASES IN JAPAN AND INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES ESSENTIAL FOR THE PROJECTION OF

US POWER IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC. JAPAN'S NEIGHBORS, INCLUDING THE USSR AND THE PRC, UNDERSTAND THIS AND ACCEPT, AT LEAST IMPLICITLY, CONTINUATION OF THE TREATY RELATIONSHIP. JAPAN SEEKS NO ALTERATION IN THAT RELATIONSHIP.

3. IN THIS MORE FAVORABLE ENVIRONMENT, THE GOVERNMENT HAS FOUND IT POSSIBLE TO BRING DISCUSSION OF SECURITY ISSUES INCREASINGLY INTO THE OPEN, WITNESS THE CONCERNED, BUT RELATIVELY DISPASSIONATE DISCUSSION NOW ENSUING IN THE MEDIA OVER THE CONSEQUENCES OF US TROOP REDUCTIONS IN KOREA. IT WAS ALSO POSSIBLE LAST YEAR TO ESTABLISH THE US-JAPAN SUBCOMMITTEE ON DEFENSE COOPERATION TO FACILITATE MILITARY COOPERATION IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY.

4. THE TREND TOWARDS GREATER REALISM HOWEVER IS GRADUAL. PUBLIC THREAT PERCEPTION REMAINS LOW AND LATENT FEARS OF REARMAMENT AND WAR PERSIST. THE OPPOSITION REMAINS READY TO EXTREACT POLITICAL ADVANTAGE FROM SECURITY ISSUES AND THE GOVERNMENT OFTEN FINDS ITSELF ON THE DEFENSIVE, REFLECTING A LONG-TERM DECLINE IN THE MARGIN OF LDP CONTROL. THE CONTINUED PRESENCE OF ABOUT 45,000 US SERVICEMEN, PLUS THEIR FAMILIES, CREATE OPERATIONAL PROBLEMS FOR BOTH GOVERNMENTS, PARTICULARLY ON OKINAWA, WHERE MORE THAN HALF OUR FORCES ARE CONCENTRATED. NUCLEAR-WEAPONS TRANSIT REMAINS THE MOST POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS ISSUE IN OUR RELATIONS WITH JAPAN.

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5. IN ADDITION TO MAINTAINING ASSURED ACCESS TO BASES IN JAPAN BOTH IN PEACETIME AND IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY, WE ARE SEEKING TO PERSUADE THE GOJ TO INCREASE ITS CONTRIBUTION TO OUR MUTUAL SECURITY INTERESTS. THE SUMMIT WILL PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY TO REGISTER US INTEREST IN TWO AREAS OF MAJOR IMPORTANCE: (A) LABOR COST-SHARING AND (B) JAPAN'S DEFENSE BUILDUP.

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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 TOKYO 2559

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FOR SHERMAN, EA/J

(A) LABOR COST SHARING. WE ARE ABOUT TO BEGIN NEGOTIATIONS IN TOKYO TO OBTAIN RELIEF FROM THE RAPIDLY INCREASING COST OF THE JAPANESE LABOR FORCE EMPLOYED ON OUR BASES. DESPITE A STEADY DECLINE IN THE LABOR FORCE (FROM 53,000 IN 1968 TO 29,000 IN 1975) THESE COSTS HAVE RISEN RAPIDLY (FROM \$143 MILLION IN 1968 TO \$400 MILLION IN 1975). THE MOST RAPIDLY INCREASING COMPONENT OF THESE COSTS, THE ACCRUED OBLIGATION FOR RETIREMENT ALLOWANCES, ALREADY TOTALS ABOUT \$400 MILLION. THE PER-EMPLOYEE OBLIGATION COULD MORE THAN DOUBLE IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS. GIVEN OUR OWN BUDGETARY STRINGENCIES, THIS CIRCUMSTANCE COULD THREATEN TO AFFECT OUR ABILITY TO MAINTAIN A CREDITABLE MILITARY PRESENCE IN JAPAN UNLESS WE CAN OBTAIN SOME RELIEF FROM THE JAPANESE SIDE. GOJ AGREEMENT TO DISCUSS THESE PROBLEMS SUGGESTS A READINESS TO PROVIDE SOME ASSISTANCE, BUT PROSPECTS FOR OBTAINING SUBSTANTIAL RELIEF -- POSSIBLY SEVERAL \$100 MILLION OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS -- AND FOR BUILDING A FOUNDATION FOR FURTHER BURDEN-SHARING WILL DEPEND ON A MANIFESTATION OF HIGH LEVEL US INTEREST.

(B) JAPANESE DEFENSE BUILDUP. A NEW DEFENSE PLAN
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ADOPTED IN 1976 TO GUIDE THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SELF DEFENSE FORCES OVER THE NEXT DECADE CALLED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A BALANCED PEACETIME "BASELINE FORCE" WITH THE CAPABILITY OF DEALING WITH RATHER LIMITED CONTINGENCIES AND WITH A BUILT-IN MOBILIZATION BASE FOR MODEST EXPANSION IN AN EMERGENCY. IT EMPHASIZED IMPROVEMENTS IN LOGISTICAL INFRASTRUCTURE, MARITIME SURVEILLANCE AND AIR DEFENSE, DEFENSIVE CAPABILITIES, WHICH THE US HAS QUIETLY ENCOURAGED. HOWEVER, THE GOJ ALSO DECIDED TO LIMIT DEFENSE SPENDING FOR THE

NEXT FEW YEARS TO NO MORE THAN 1 PERCENT OF GNP, AND THE
GOJ BUDGET FOR THE NEXT FISCAL YEAR FALLS SHORT OF EVEN
THIS MODEST LIMIT, REPRESENTING BUT .88 PERCENT OF GNP.
ALTHOUGH THE OVER-ALL GOJ BUDGET ROSE BY MORE THAN 17 PERCENT,
DEFENSE SPENDING ROSE BY LESS THAN 12 PERCENT, AND THE
DEFENSE SHARE OF THE BUDGET CONTINUED ITS LONG DECLINE, FALLING
BELOW 6 PERCENT FOR THE FIRST TIME. THE SUMMIT WILL PROVIDE AN
OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS HIGH-LEVEL US DISAPPOINTMENT IN
THIS BUDGET WHICH RAISES SERIOUS QUESTIONS ABOUT JAPAN'S
WILLINGNESS TO IMPLEMENT EVEN THE MODEST GOALS OF THE NEW
DEFENSE PLAN.
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